

**INSIDE  
Commander's  
Corner**

This week Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano, 1st Corps and Fort Lewis commanding general, looks back on the accomplishments the post's Soldiers and civilians have achieved during his command.

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**Make a Difference Day**

Images from contributions by the Fort Lewis community.

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**Outstanding employee**

A Madigan worker is recognized for her contributions despite a disability.

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**Trauma care**

A local team trains in one of the nation's top trauma care clinics.

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**Triathlon**

Local woman competes in the "Ironman"

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**NOTICES**

**Corps to change command**

Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano will relinquish command of 1st Corps to Lt. Gen. James Dubik in a ceremony Wednesday at 10 a.m. at the Main Post Flagpole.

Traffic on Liggett Avenue, in front of Building 2025, will be detoured for the ceremony.

All members of the Fort Lewis community are invited to welcome Lt. Gen. Dubik back to the post, and bid farewell to Lt. Gen. Soriano.

# Long wait over for Stryker families

Main body of ground-breaking unit begins arriving after year-long tour of duty with Task Force Olympia

By J.C. Mathews  
Northwest Guardian

For about 2,000 Fort Lewis families, the wait is over. And, for the remaining family and friends awaiting the return of 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, the end is in sight.

As the one-year anniversary of its deployment drew closer, the Arrowhead Brigade continued its mission-ending flow from Iraq to Fort Lewis this week, with about 1,400 members home by Oct. 25. Several hun-

dred more were expected by today.

The Army's first Stryker brigade combat team, 3rd Brigade started its deployment Nov. 8, 2003, and served in northern Iraq as part of Task Force Olympia, headquartered in Mosul.

The Lancers of 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, recently deployed to Iraq to take over the 3rd Brigade's mission in the task force.

Planeloads of 3rd Brigade Soldiers arrived on an almost

daily basis all week, with welcoming ceremonies held at Sheridan Gymnasium. First Lt. Nick Kardonsky of Company C, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry, returned Oct. 23 and was part of a group on hand at the gym Monday to greet more arriving members of his company. He said the fellowship among members of the unit helped make the deployment memorable.

"The thing I'd remember most is the fun we had with our friends and comrades, the missions we executed well, the missions that went flawlessly — those are the things I'll remember most," Kardonsky said.

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Jason Kaye

Staff Sgt. Mike Watkins of Company C, 1st Bn., 23 Inf. gets a hug from wife Lynnina and daughter Ella during the battalion's welcome home Monday.

*"It brings back a lot of memories."*

Mark Vance



Jason Kaye

Rangers from Company C, 2nd Bn., 75th Ranger Regt. tackle an obstacle during a recent best squad competition. The event was part of a day-long celebration, including Rangers both past and present, honoring the battalion for 30 years of service at Fort Lewis.

## A gathering of Rangers

Battalion celebrates 30 years of service in the Northwest

By Spc. Sarah Wilkins  
1st Corps Public Affairs

Rangers traded war stories and barracks antics with current comrades and old friends at a day-long celebration Oct. 21 honoring 30 years of 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment service at Fort Lewis.

"It brings back a lot of memories," said Mark Vance, a former sergeant who wore the black Ranger beret as a private back

in 1974. "I could still get out there and kick some butt — I'll just have to pass it on to someone else."

Although the beret's color has changed from black to tan and the mission has changed from the Cold War to the Global War on Terrorism, Rangers still have the same high standards essential to success.

"The lineage we have is crucial to the standards we have," said Russ Vanasdale, a former staff sergeant who served in Panama. "There's nothing these guys wouldn't do, from the top to the very bottom, to complete the mission."

Squads of Rangers climbed to the top of obstacles and high-crawled under wire to win the best squad competition — one

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of many events held throughout the day to demonstrate the Rangers' capabilities.

After putting together weapons, climbing up a wet, 30-foot rope, running about a mile carrying a 250-pound litter, racing through an obstacle course, sprinting a couple hundred yards to a range and shooting a variety of weapons using different stances, the six-man squads exhibited many techniques vital to effectively combating an enemy.

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## Baghdad native says Iraq better off today

Iraqi graduate student touring to thank Soldiers

By Bob Reinert  
Northwest Guardian

If family members of Fort Lewis Soldiers serving in Iraq want to know what impact their loved ones are having in that country, they should ask Maysaa Mahmood. She has experienced it firsthand.

A Baghdad native, Mahmood came to the U.S. less than three months ago to pursue an advanced degree at the University of Arizona.

Before that, she had lived through the Saddam Hussein regime and the country's subsequent liberation by Coalition forces. She visited Fort Lewis Oct. 20 as part of a Department of Defense-sponsored program to inform military members and families about how life has changed in Iraq.

"No words can thank all of the American troops that are in my country now," said Mahmood, a pharmacist who served as a translator after the liberation. "I noticed so many things that changed."

"The regime just stole our money," Mahmood said. "After the liberation, I was able to see the details of that corruption, how horrible it was and where all our money went."

Under Saddam, the money certainly didn't find its way into the pockets of Iraqis. According to Mahmood, they earned an average of \$1.50 per month. Now, she said, the minimum is \$200 per month.

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## 1st Corps HQ preps for Yama Sakura

By Spc. Sarah Wilkins  
1st Corps Public Affairs

Wading through snow and battling frigid temperatures, Soldiers from 1st Corps will enter a building and deal with a war happening in a rainy, humid virtual reality.

But months before this happens in January, the Soldiers are making sure they're ready by checking out their equipment and training readiness during the Yama Sakura Cudgel this week.

"It prepares us for the exercise so we don't go there and look (unprofessional)," said Spc. Matthew McLendon, 1st Corps fire support element. "It sharpens our skills."

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